

SILVER



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Souvenir Spoons

Santa Catalina Island

by
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—photo by Robert Watkins
An early set commemorating Catalina Island before the Casino was built, and bearing the infrequently seen Watson-Newell Co. pennant-w trademark.

If you are looking for a fun spot on the California coast, where you can soak up the sun and get away from the hustle-bustle of urban life, Catalina is the place to go. Once the watering spot for the great, near great, and average Joe in the thirties and forties, the lifestyle of the residents is relaxed. During the summer months the population of this 76 square mile playground more than doubles because of the high school and college students who go over to work.

Catalina is one of the Santa Barbara Islands, and is twenty-two miles from the mainland in the San Pedro Channel and Gulf of Santa Catalina. It is 21 miles long and 8 miles wide at its widest point. It is three times the size of Bermuda, and was discovered in 1542 by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, a Portuguese explorer in the service of Spain, who called it San Salvador. It became a haven for pirates and smugglers some sixty years later after another explorer, Sebastian Vizcaino, visited the island and gave it the present name in honor of St. Catherine of Sienna.

The island's development as a resort and sport fisherman's paradise was controlled by the Santa Catalina Island Company, originally owned by the Banning family and later by William Wrigley, Jr., the chewing gum king. In order to preserve the island in its present state and let it remain an open wilderness, the Santa Catalina Island Conservancy, a non-profit organization, was formed in 1972.

Avalon, famous for the song "I met my love in Avalon, beside the bay . . .," is the principal town. The settlement of Two Harbors at Catalina's Isthmus is toward the island's northeast end. The Big White Steamer, the 2,000 passenger *S. S. Catalina*, no longer makes the daily round trip between the mainland and the island, but visitors can reach it by sea and air via other means. Flight time is 15 minutes, and channel crossing by sea is about two hours. Cars cannot be taken to the island, but bicycles and small gasoline-powered carts can be rented for use around Avalon. Only pedestrians and tour buses are permitted outside the harbor area.



AVALON BAY, CATALINA ISLAND, CALIFORNIA

SA-H862

The Casino and the Big White Steamer "S. S. Catalina," are seen in a 1936 picture postcard view.

There are many things to do and see on Catalina and in the surrounding waters. There are fine beaches, tennis courts, horseback riding, a golf course, deep sea and pier fishing. Tours are available by bus and by boat. One tour takes you up roads that present a magnificent view of Avalon and its sparkling blue crescent-shaped bay. A variety of marine life can be seen by taking a ride on the Glass Bottom Boat, and the Flying Fish Boat trip provides views of nocturnal flying fish by searchlight. The Casino houses the Catalina Island Museum, theater, and the famous ballroom that featured the big bands of Benny Goodman, Jan Garber and others. A cruise to Seal Rocks travels along the island's coastline to the tip where a large seal colony often resides.

Catalina's Isthmus is a scenic and historical spot where gold was mined and which has served as a locale for films and television. Here at the island's narrowest point (about a half mile wide), it is just a few minutes walk from Isthmus Cove, on one side, to Catalina Harbor on the other side. Several inland tours explore the island's natural history and points of interest.

The matching fork and spoon pictured have embossed views of Sugar Loaf, Glass Bottom Boat, Seal Rock, and a tuna fish on the obverse handles. Angel's Flight, Black Bass Wgt. 486 Lbs., a Flying Fish, and the tuna are shown on the reverse. The spoon bowl provides a view of Avalon, Catalina Island before the Casino was built. Both pieces are sterling, and stamped with the Watson, Newell Company's pennant *w* trademark. The latter is an early mark (c.1879-1905), not often seen on souvenir and commemorative pieces. More familiar to collectors are the company's pennant *h* and crown-*w*-lion marks. The spoon appears in the late Anton Hardt's third book

A Third Harvest of Souvenir Spoons (1969), but the maker is not identified. In the book's introduction Mr. Hardt explains that he purchased the photographs from the estate of the late Albert Stutzenberger, author of *The American Story in Spoons* (1953). Each spoon photograph was identified as to what it commemorated, but none included the makers' trademarks.



(1879-1905)



(1905-1929)



TRADE



STERLING



MARK

(1910-)



Marks of Watson, Newell Company (Watson & Newell or Watson, Newell & Company): pennant-w, pennant-h, and the crown-w-lion. The mark at the bottom has been found on some souvenir spoons. —courtesy of Dorothy Rainwater.